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NEVADA ORGANIC REVIEW

Nevada's Organic Community — Growing for You

Grow Local, Buy Local and Dine Local

Food for Thought for Nevada?

Ames, Iowa. - Tod Murphy, has a simple, old-fashioned approach to rural economic development: Serve home-cooked meals at a diner made with fresh food products raised by local farmers.

Murphy, a farmer and rural entrepreneur, believes he has proof that his formula works: 70 percent of every dollar of food expenditures at a diner he owns in northern Vermont goes directly to local farmers who supply his diner.

"I want to be at 80, but 70 is very good," said Murphy, founder and president of The Farmers Diner. "Seventy cents of every dollar spent on food is success." Murphy was in Iowa last week (*early July*) to speak at a seminar at Iowa State University in Ames.

He hopes to build small clusters of diners like his that get their food from a common processing and storage facility. Initial expansion will be in New England, but he hopes to expand to the Midwest, including in Iowa.

After founding his company in 1998, Murphy began seeking investments. In 2000, he opened a meat-processing plant and commissary. Three years ago, he opened The Farmers Diner in Barre, Vt., a city with a population of 9,300 that is 40 miles south of Burlington, Vt.

The diner has won national acclaim for its use of locally grown and locally processed foods. It serves breakfast all day, and its specials change with the seasons.

The motto of the Farmers Diner is "food from here." The restaurant buys its meat, poultry, dairy products and fresh produce raised by farmers located within 70 miles of Barre. The diner's commissary prepares and stores the farm products for use in the restaurant.

Other local people provide food, too, for the diner. Two women who live a mile away make the diner's pasta. Half of its bread comes from a family bakery located over the hill from the diner, Murphy said. He has had inquiries about the business from such places as Madison, Wis., Austin, Texas, Portland, Ore., and Birmingham, Ala. He hopes to expand the concept, opening other restaurants centered on locally grown foods. Next up: a 150-seat diner in Lebanon, N.H., near Dartmouth College in Hanover, followed by 10 additional diners in Boston. Murphy and other local-foods enthusiasts believe Iowa is ripe for a restaurant like The Farmers Diner. They point to:

- The population of producers who raise garden crops, livestock and other farm products naturally, in cases using organic practices;
- The number of farms focused on particular food products, such as wine, organic meat and poultry, or goat cheese;
- The appetite among consumers for food raised by farmers they know or at least know about.

"Is there room for it? I think that there would probably be room for a moderately priced diner, particularly in Des Moines or Ames, a college town," said Neil Hamilton, director of the Drake University's Agricultural Law Center in Des Moines and chairman of the Iowa Food Policy Council.

The Drake law center and Iowa State University's Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture co-sponsored Murphy's visit.

Some restaurateurs in Iowa already tap locally grown food products. Several upscale restaurants in central Iowa and in Iowa City use the products whenever they are available. Most also feature farmers who supply food for items on their menus. The Cafe and Aunt Maude's, both in Ames, also use locally grown food products.

(See *Grow* Page 3)

In this issue:

Grow, Buy, Dine Local	1
Where are all the Nevada Farmers?	1
Wild Oats Vendor Policy	2
NV Legislative Grant	4
SFMNP—2005	3
NDOA 4-page Supplement	☺

WHERE ARE ALL THE NEVADA FARMERS?

By: Ann Louhela, President, NCFMA

It's farmers' market season. Local markets are in full swing and more popular than ever with local shoppers. Throughout the nation, farmers' markets continue to grow in popularity and Nevada is no exception. Three new markets have opened this summer, in Reno, Dayton and Genoa. With these markets, a new challenge has emerged, finding enough farmers to supply the farm-fresh produce that consumers are demanding. The Nevada Certified Farmers' Market Association is taking this challenge head on. The Association is a nonprofit corporation comprised of farmers, market

(See *Where*: Page 2)

Where: Continued from Page 1

managers, government organizations, local businesses, and community members. Its goals are to strengthen farmers' markets for the benefit of farmers, consumers and the local community and to support Nevada agriculture. "Supporting Nevada agriculture is high on our list of priorities," says Ann Louhela, president of the We encourage shoppers to buy local and buy fresh," says Louhela. "Buying local, organic food is better for the environment, the economy and the consumer." And who better than the local organic farmer to educate the public about the benefits of buying fresh, organic food? Urban consumers develop long lasting friendships and bonds with the farmers they buy from. It is a reconnection with the earth that is sorely missed in the urban lifestyle.

To further support Nevada agriculture, the Association is pursuing year-round markets that will support sales for beef, honey, cheese, and producers with extended growing seasons. The Association is also active in promoting community supported agriculture and developing farmer to restaurant produce connections. For more information, farmers can visit www.nevadagrown.com for a list of current markets or call (775) 351-2551. (Contact NV Dept. of Agriculture to locate Nevada Farmers (775) 688-1182 x 243)

2005 SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

By: Trish Newman, State of Nevada—Food Distribution Program

We are pleased to announce the 2005 Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program in Nevada. Using USDA funding, this program provides **\$ 30.00 of FREE coupons to Seniors** who are 60 years of age or older and meet established income guidelines set by the Federal Government. Working closely with Northern Nevada Farmers, this year's program dates were moved to the middle of July to better accommodate their crop/product availability. Southern Nevada's Program was from April to June.

Also new in our 2005 program, Roadside Stands and CSA's have been added to Farmer Market sites. Each Farmer selling qualifying products must complete an application provided by the State of NV Food Distribution Office. In return, the Farmer will receive an assigned redemption code and signage authorizing participation in the 2005 program. **The ultimate goal of our program this year is 100% redemption of coupons by Seniors to Farmers, providing nutritional products for our Nevadan Seniors and additional revenue to NV Farmers.**

To participate, Farmers must complete an application provided by the State Food Distribution Office, have their Market Manager sign-off, and return the completed form to the State Food Distribution Office. Roadside and CSA Farmers must send their completed application directly to the State Food Distribution Office. Once applications are approved, notice will be sent to Farmers.

Nevada Seniors may spend their coupons ONLY within the State of Nevada. New this year, the first two coupons in every booklet are green and 13 are white in color. It is important to note the difference in the colors.

Neighboring state's Farmers participating in Certified Nevada Farmer Markets, who have applied and been accepted to participate in the 2005 Program, may also accept program coupons. Redemption of the green coupons, however, is limited to Nevada Farmers. In addition the white coupons may be redeemed with both Nevada and approved neighboring state's farmers selling at Farmers Markets. For additional information, please contact the Food distribution Office at (775) 688-1160. TNEWMAN@purchasing.state.nv.us



SELLING DIRECT TO STORE... VENDOR REQUIREMENTS

A farmer who wishes to sell to their nearby Wild Oats Market cannot just show up at the delivery door with his produce. The farmer must start by writing to or with a telephone call to Julie King, National Pricing Analyst, Produce and Floral, Wild Oats Natural Market Place in Boulder Colorado at 720-562-5053.

Yes, there is paperwork, involved. In order to become one of the store's vendors there are several minimum requirements, including a few forms, that will come to you by mail. Once all of the information requested has been received at Wild Oats, the store's accounting department will process it and issue a vendor number. This process takes about 2 weeks. Until it is complete the store is not authorized to buy from you. **Requirements for all New Vendors:**

Category Manager Approval - One of the category managers will review your product offerings. Their approval is required to become a new vendor. (i.e., Meadowood Reno— Wild Oats Produce Manager, or the Wild Oats Department Manager in your community)

Product Liability Insurance- You must carry a minimum of \$2 million general aggregate. There is an explanation of our full insurance requirement attached.

Organic Certification- If you grow organic produce you must provide a copy of your current USDA organic certificate.

PLU or UPC - All items must be labeled with a PLU sticker or UPC code. If you have questions regarding this requirement please call.

(See Wild Oats: Page 4)

Calendar

September 11th :

TomatoFest, Carmel, CA — an extravagant outdoor barbeque featuring 55 of America's best chefs, 100 great wines from Monterey, Salsa Showcase & Olive Oil tasting. Music and Dancing. visit:
www.tomatofest.com

October 2-3: Hoes Down—

18th annual harvest celebration, at Full Belly Farm in Capay, CA. is a project of the Ecological Farming Association. Please call (800) 791-2110, or visit the website: www.hoesdown.org

Useful Printed Resources on Organic Farming

- Organic Tree Fruit Management. 1998. Linda Edwards. Certified Organic Associations of British Columbia. Available from IFM, 1-800-332-3179.
 - Organic Apple Production Manual. 2000. S. Swezey et al. University of California DANR. Order from 1-800-994-8849.
 - Managing Cover Crops Profitably. 1998. Sustainable Agriculture Network.
www.sare.org
- Building Soils for Better Crops. 2000 F. Magdoff and H. Van Es. Sustainable Agriculture Network. www.sare.org

Cornell University

Newswise: "Organic farming produces same yields as conventional farming", with less fossil energy, less water, less erosion, better soil quality, maintains more biological resources.

www.newswise.com/p/articles/513110

(Grow: Continued from Page 1)

In Waterloo, Rudy's Tacos buys 70 percent of its food from area farmers, and the place is packed at lunchtime.

"People want to be attached to something bigger than themselves. Local food has become it," Murphy told his audience in Ames last week. One of Iowa's biggest advantages would be its ready supply of pork from hogs raised by diversified family farms, Murphy said. Niman Ranch Pork, based in Thornton, comes from hogs raised the old-fashioned way by a network of farmers, principally Iowans.

State Center-based Eden Natural pork comes from Berkshire hogs, a breed known for juicy, flavorful meat, that are raised by another network of Iowa farmers. That network includes three Hilleman brothers whose Hilldale Pork supplies hogs for Eden Natural.

Murphy said building his business has been a lot of work, in part because pork like that available in Iowa is not as readily available in Vermont. He and his team have had to talk to a lot of farmers to find those willing to join the venture.

Vermont's short growing season poses special challenges, as do the state's long, cold winters. The diner's potato producer ran out of potatoes two months ago, so the grower and officials at the diner are discussing how to ensure year-round supplies. Meanwhile, the diner is using potatoes grown elsewhere, including across the border in Canada on Prince Edward Island.

Tomatoes are another challenge. Locally grown tomatoes can be found in Vermont from July through September, but the rest of the year have to be brought in from afar. The Farmers Diner plans to process locally grown tomatoes this year so the restaurant can use tomato sauce from local produce during winter. Certain food items, such as orange juice and sugar, have to come from distant markets.

For other products, such as grass-fed beef, considerable time is required to build a dependable supply. Currently, the diner serves beef from grass-fed cattle that are fed grain for finishing. Murphy wants to convert to cattle raised only on grass, a process expected to take three to five years.

His business model measures success differently than most American businesses. Farmers who supply food for the diner have benefited first. Returns to investors will take longer. Murphy hopes to turn a profit next year. But most of his investors "are in it for the long haul," he said.

As word of his business has spread, investor interest has grown, too. So far, his company has attracted about \$1 million from investors. "There is no secret" to his success, he tells potential investors. "It's the willingness to have it be awful for a number of years. . . . It's not easy. It's not glamorous. It's seven years of just being relentless and having no ego about it."

Tod Murphy based his business on a generic plan for a Boston-based dessert company. "Our business plans are identical. Our numbers are just different," said the founder of The Farmers Diner in Barre, Vt. Murphy offers these tips to others considering opening an eatery that uses locally produced foods:

- Assess the size of your market;
- Plan how to get into it;
- Know your cash-burn rate up front;
- Be careful to plan a business big enough to cover your costs;
- Overbuild the kitchen;
- When possible, buy equipment to perform time-consuming tasks, like peeling potatoes;
- And take the long view.

"We will probably start making money in year eight," he said last week during a presentation at Iowa State University in Ames. "It's a long process."

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By: Agribusiness writer—July, 2005

Information about the so-called "local foods movement" is available at these Web sites:

- www.statefoodpolicy.org
- www.practicalfarmers.org
- www.leopold.iastate.edu
- www.newfarm.org

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responsible for accuracy of reprinted articles.
We strive for information useful to Nevada
Certified Organic Farmers Handlers, and our
readers.*



NEVADA LEGISLATURE GRANTS \$50,000 FOR LOCALLY GROWN CAMPAIGN

With help from Senator Mike McGinness, and the \$50,000. grant from the Nevada Legislature, the Nevada Department of Agriculture will (in October) hold a series of meetings to determine how to administer and spend \$50,000.

As requested, the money will be to assist in promoting Nevada Agriculture. Low income seniors, WIC Programs, and Nevada farmer's markets may all receive needed supplementary funding. It is anticipated that the Nevada Small Farm Annual Conference to be held next spring, will also benefit from the grant funds..

It is expected that Nevada Producers, the NV Certified Farmers Market Association, Nevada-Grown organization, and State Food Distribution will be participating in the Fall meetings..

The agendas for the meeting/s will concentrate how and where the dollars may be spent, and the procedure for making application for funds. For more information, contact the Nevada Department of Agriculture, Reno office: 775-688-1182 x 243.

NDOA POLICY— NEVADA PRODUCER CERTIFICATES

May, 2005, saw new policy issued by the Nevada Department of Agriculture, regarding the issuance of Producer Certificates. The certificates are issued for two reasons: to verify the holder of the certificate as a producer of agricultural products under NRS 576.018, and to facilitate the development of producer only farmers markets, to bring together local farmers and buyers.

With the new policy, the applicant must provide to the department — clear and convincing evidence that production of his/her agricultural product/s is a "primary" business and that the sale of same is the primary purpose for obtaining a Nevada Producer Certificate.

Wild Oats: *Continued from Page 2*

Vendor Authorization - You will be sending this in— along with the other forms. You will be required to show sample invoices, federal taxpayer ID number, proof of insurance, organic certification (or conventional), and a list of your farm's distribution facilities, if applicable.

Store Delivery Listing - List all the stores where you will be delivering your produce or product.

New Item Form - Use this form to list all products you will be selling to the store. All items must be filled in completely with cost, case pack, description, and UPC code if applicable. If you do use UPC codes please send a copy of each label. This can be a photocopy or an actual label (please make sure it includes the UPC bar code).

Purchasing Notes - is the form where you list any of your order requirements such as minimum order size, shipping charges etc. that will affect cost at the back door.

Indemnification Agreement , signed and dated .

Organic or Conventional Verification - Note; You must be "certified" to sell your product as organic. If conventional you will be asked to attest that you do not grow, carry or sell any products that are in any way labeled "organic".

When you receive your Vendor Application packet from Boulder, it will contain:

- Vendor Indemnification Agreement;
- Request for Certificate of Insurance;
- Request for Proof of Organic Certification; and
- Organic or Conventional Verification



Editor Note: We appreciate the assistance from Bruce Quinlan, Store Director. at Meadowood Wild Oats in Reno, at 5695 S. Virginia Street.

Find a store in your community — and a lot of consumer information on the store website: www.wildoats.com.